

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 2, 2004

Honorable Harold Rogers, Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
H-218 Capitol
Washington DC 20515

Honorable Martin Sabo, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Homeland Security
1016 Longworth HOB
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Sabo:

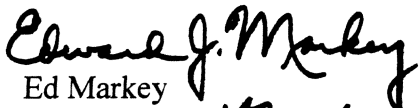
We are writing to ask you to fund the Metropolitan Medical Response System (MMRS) in the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) at the level of \$50 million for FY2005.

MMRS was established in the wake of the terrorist release of sarin nerve gas in a Tokyo subway in 1995. The program provides funds to 125 municipal authorities in 43 states for local first responder training, equipment, and pharmaceutical caches. In order to receive the funds, local authorities must first submit to DHS a plan for coordinating local fire, police, hospital, and public health agencies in the event of terrorist WMD attacks, including nuclear, biological, chemical, and radiological weapons. This planning includes preparing for treatment of 1,000 or more casualties, triage, direct distribution of vaccines and other pharmaceuticals, and protection of medical facilities in the 24-48 hours before Federal resources arrive.

The threat to American cities from WMD terrorist attack must not be underestimated. In the shadow of this threat, local first responders must be prepared to act in a coordinated fashion and have the specialized equipment, training, and information infrastructure to do so. MMRS is the only Federal program that directly supports and encourages the coordination of local first responders to manage a WMD mass casualty event.

Although the President's FY2004 budget request included no funds for MMRS, Congress wisely appropriated \$50 million for the program. We note that the Committee recently denied a request from DHS to reprogram the majority of these funds. We believe a spending level of \$50 million for FY2005 is justified for this vital program and will continue to significantly enhance local municipalities' preparedness for the threat of major terror attacks.

Sincerely,


Ed Markey

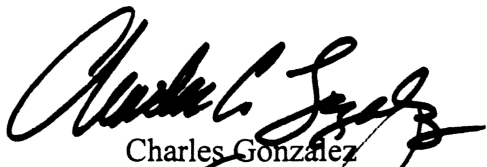

Eleanor Holmes Norton


Loretta Sanchez


Karen McCarthy


Barney Frank


Sheila Jackson-Lee


Charles Gonzalez

Charles Gonzalez


Ed Pastor

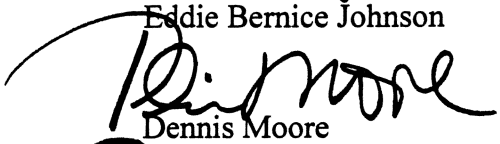
Ed Pastor


Barbara Lee

Barbara Lee


Eddie Bernice Johnson

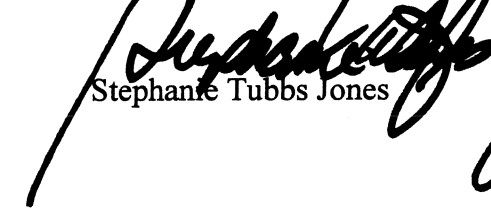
Eddie Bernice Johnson


Dennis Moore

Dennis Moore


Raúl Grijalva

Raúl Grijalva


Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Stephanie Tubbs Jones


James Langevin

James Langevin


John Conyers

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Joe Hoeffel

Joe Hoeffel


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Ellen Tauscher


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Anthony Weiner

Anthony Weiner


Ed Case

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Dennis Cardoza

Dennis Cardoza